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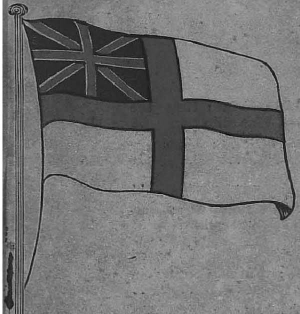

ACTION!

An R.I.N. rating on the job

INDIA'S FIRST LINE OF DEFENCE

"We like to think that India's first line of defence is, or should be, the Navy, for it is from across the seas that any threat to India is bound to come. There should, therefore, be no cheese-paring of naval effort after the war.

"India of the future must be able to stand upon her own naval feet. The day is over when India can say: Let somebody else do the naval job for me."

—VICE-ADMIRAL SIR HERBERT FITZHERBERT, *at a farewell Press Conference on March 18, 1943, when relinquishing his office of Flag Officer Commanding the Royal Indian Navy.*

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ROYAL
INDIAN NAVY SUPPLEMENT

India's Navy Chief

Sketch of Vice-Admiral J. H. Godfrey

VICE-ADMIRAL J. H. GODFREY, C.B.

Appointment Significant of R.I.N.'s Important Role

THE new Flag Officer Commanding, Royal Indian Navy, Vice-Admiral John Henry Godfrey, C.B., comes to India straight from the Admiralty where he has held the key post of Director of Naval Intelligence since 1939. He has seen service in Eastern waters on previous occasions, the first time as long ago as 1910, again in 1915–17, and more recently in 1931–33, when he commanded His Majesty's cruisers *Kent* and *Suffolk* on the China station.

Born in 1888, Admiral Godfrey entered H.M.S. *Britannia* as a naval cadet at the age of 14. He thus has 40 years' service to his credit. He went to sea in 1904, was promoted Sub-Lieutenant in 1907, and took five "firsts" in his examinations for Lieutenant, in which rank he was confirmed from October 30th, 1908. He specialized in navigation.

After serving in the Mediterranean, he joined H.M. Gunboat *Bramble* in China, October 1910, became navigator and served in the River Yangtse during the opening phases of the Chinese Revolution in 1911.

When His Majesty's Fleet mobilized for the last war he was appointed navigator to H.M.S. *Charybdis*, flagship of Rear-Admiral R. E. Wemyss, commanding the 12th Cruiser Squadron. In 1915, he proceeded to the Suez Canal. He took part in landing the Lancashire Fusiliers on "W" Beach on April 26th, 1915, during the Dardanelles campaign and was present at the Suvla Bay landings and at the final evacuation from Gallipoli. He remained in H.M.S. *Euryalus* with Admiral Wemyss when the latter was appointed Commander-in-Chief, East Indies and Egypt. During this period, he served in the East Indies, Persian Gulf, Red Sea and Egypt.

In August 1917, he became Assistant to the Chief of Staff, Mediterranean, and in October 1918, accompanied that officer up the Dardanelles and to Constantinople in H.M.S. *Superb*, wearing the flag of Admiral Gough-Calthorpe who arranged the armistice with Turkey, and subsequently at the opening up of Sebastopol and the Black Sea Ports by the Allied Fleets.

Promoted to Commander on June 30th, 1920, he served for two years in the Plans Division of the Admiralty and for another two years on the staff of the Royal Naval Staff College, Greenwich.

From 1925 to 1928, when he was promoted Captain, he was Commander of H.M.S. *Diomede* on the New Zealand station. Following a spell ashore as Deputy Director of the Royal Navy Staff College from 1929 to 1931, he went to sea again and commanded the cruisers *Kent* and *Suffolk* on the China Station for the next two years. He was at Shanghai during the opening phases of the Sino-Japanese conflict in 1932.

Then followed two years as Deputy Director of Plans at the Admiralty from November 1933, after which he returned to sea and commanded the battle cruiser *Repulse* from 1936 to 1939. *Repulse* was then with the Mediterranean Fleet and she saw much active service off the Spanish Coast and at Haifa.

Joining the Admiralty as Director of Naval Intelligence on January 24th, 1939, Captain Godfrey was promoted to Rear-Admiral on February 22nd, 1939, and to Vice-Admiral on September 15th, 1942. He has had wide experience of all aspects of naval warfare—experience which will stand him in good stead during the tenure of his new office. His appointment shows the importance which the Admiralty attaches to the war activities of the greatly expanded Royal Indian Navy.

The Royal Indian Navy

Guards India's Vast Coastline

Process of Expansion Still Proceeding

WHY does India need a Navy? If you think of the vast extent of her coastline and the great Himalaya mountain range that walls her off on the north, you will see that India is in a sense an island. To reach her, men and materials in the vast majority of cases travel by sea; the land route is long and difficult. Her trade with other countries is huge, yet all but a very small proportion of it must cross the oceans. To-day when war has drawn near to our country, troops and implements of war are pouring in to help in her defence They too must come by sea. Other lands in their turn need India's products to carry out the war against ruthless aggression. These products must be conveyed from our ports in ships.

In peace time and during war India relies on her communications by sea as much as any island in a true geographical sense. No island prospered that did not give thought to the defence of its coasts and the ships passing up and down them.

Defence by sea is entrusted to ships specially equipped and men specially trained for the purpose. India is protected by the great naval strength of the Allied Nations; to that strength she herself contributes.

AN OBJECT OF JUST PRIDE

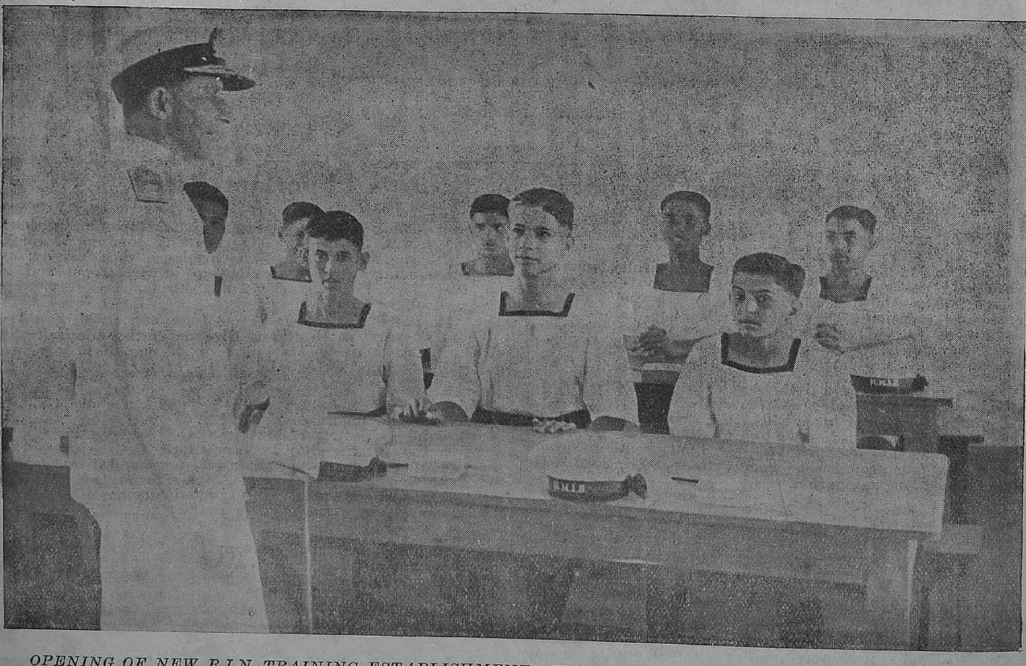
In the Royal Indian Navy our country has a Service in which she can justly take pride. It guards our ports: it patrols our great coastline ceaselessly, ever watchful of incursions by enemy submarines, surface vessels and aircraft. It escorts merchant shipping. Last year the largest single assemblage of ships that ever reached our shores entered India's ports shepherded in the last stages by ships of the Royal Indian Navy. In it came troops and equipment. It was the job of the Navy—India's Navy included—to see that no enemy molested these ships. The job was done with the thoroughness for which the Senior Service is renowned.

NAVY IS INDIA'S HERITAGE

Centuries ago Indian rulers maintained fleets for just the same purpose, the protection of the coast and of shipping. In more recent times the Mahrattas gained renown by sea as well as by land, and the Moghul Emperors also maintained naval forces. The origins of India's navy go back as far as 1612, when the East India Company armed vessels to protect commerce from piracy on the western coast. Since that time India has continuously had a Navy, though its name has undergone various changes. For more than two centuries that Navy's headquarters were in Bombay, where many ships were built for it, and for Britain's Navy as well, by a famous line of Parsee shipbuilders. To-day Naval Headquarters are in New Delhi, the seat of the Central Government, but Bombay remains its great base.

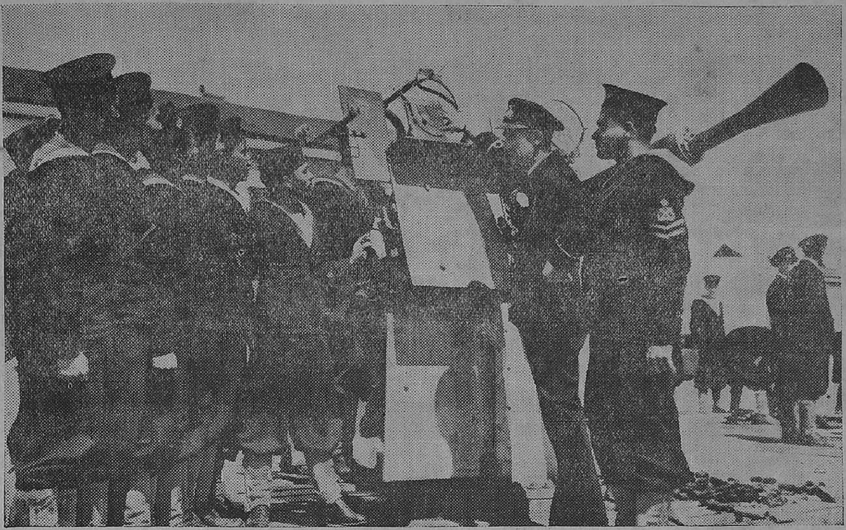
Between 1914 and 1918 ships, officers and men of the Service assisted in the conduct of the war at sea. To give only one example, H.M.I.S. *Hardinge* won fame by her courageous action in defending the Suez Canal which the enemy planned to cross in an attempt to attack Egypt. And now once more India's Navy is on guard, watching over our shores and our trade, but it is a Navy that has expanded enormously.

In the five years before the present war the Royal Indian Navy built up a small but experienced body of men well-trained in mine-sweeping, gunnery, and other duties essential for the protection of India's coast. The outbreak of war in September 1939 imposed on it enhanced responsibilities, and, to enable it to shoulder these, more men and ships were added to it in large numbers. The process of expansion is still rapidly proceeding.



OPENING OF NEW R.I.N. TRAINING ESTABLISHMENT.—Vice-Admiral Sir Herbert Fitzherbert, till recently Flag Officer Commanding the R.I.N. early in 1942 opened at Karachi H.M.I.S. Dilawar, *the junior boys' training establishment. Most of the boys had arrived one day earlier, clad chiefly in the attire of village lads.*

The Admiral with some of the pupils in a class room.



SAILORS OF THE ROYAL INDIAN NAVY TRAINING IN ENGLAND.—Royal Indian Naval ratings under instruction at a training camp in England. Picture shows a gunnery training class.

A Fine Profession

Life in a Ship is a Family Affair

THE Navy as India's means of defence by sea is a fine profession for men of alacrity and spirit.

Perhaps it is the sea and salt breeze that bring men closer together than on land, but it is true to say that life in a ship is a family affair. It is the personal interest of every officer to care for the welfare of the men under his command.

The Captain is in command, and each of his officers has a separate duty to perform.

The Navigating Officer must keep a reckoning of the ship's position and carefully mark off all alterations in her course.

The Gunnery Officer controls the shooting of the guns.

The Second-in Command, or First Lieutenant, as he is called, has many duties. For instance, he is responsible under the Captain for the discipline and general organization of those on board.

The men are divided up to provide for firing the guns, steering the ship, detecting submarines and dropping depth charges to destroy them, working the wireless, keeping a sharp look out, operating the engines and, last but not least, providing good hot appetising food for all.

In his leisure a sailor finds time to look after his clothes, for he is most punctilius about his appearance, especially when in port.

He also enjoys wrestling or boxing, and a drama always provides fun. These forms of amusement may be found in every Naval ship and are most popular.

There are plenty of men who take all the advantages that the Navy offers for improving their education, and often you will find them studying hard in their off-time.

Officers too take every opportunity for increasing their knowledge.

Naval training in all its various spheres broadens a man's outlook and makes him self-dependent.

Coastal Forces of R.I.N. at Work

Like David Against Goliath

WHAT happens, if a big Jap warship spots us? The question came from a landsman taking part in the recent combined operation which destroyed Myebon on the Japanese line of communications below Akyab in Burma. He asked it when we were well out to sea on our homeward journey, not nervously, but as a matter of general interest, writes an Indian Army Observer.

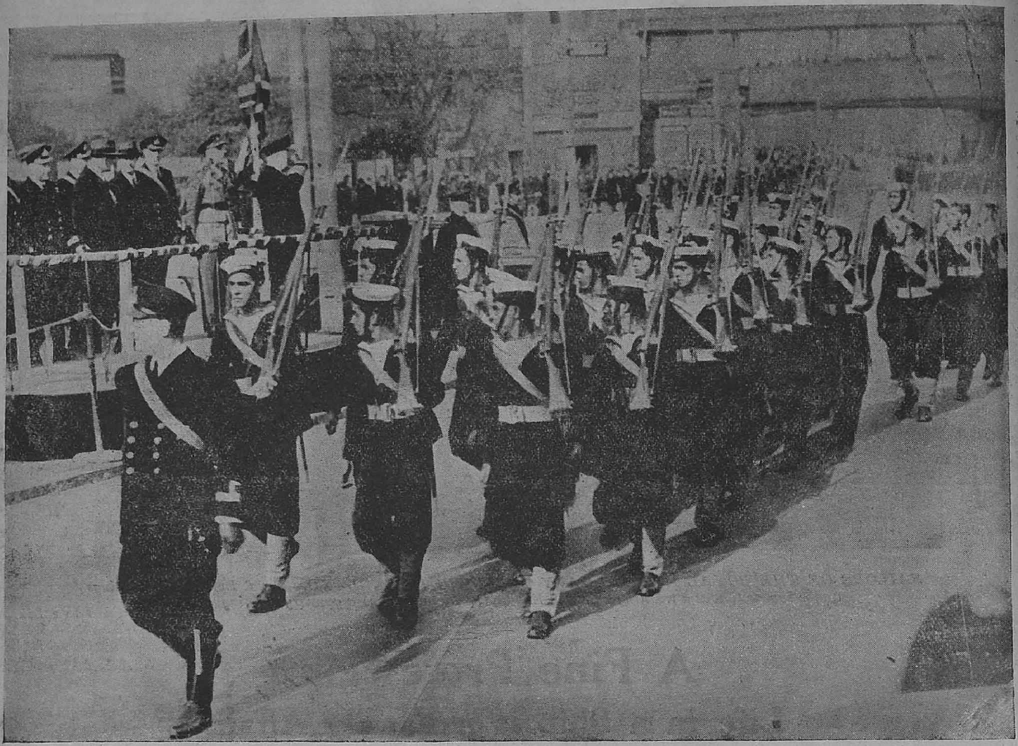
"What happens?", echoed the naval officer in command of the expedition gently, "Well, we fight and then, if he blows the bottom out of the ship, we go for a swim."

That is the spirit in which the Royal Indian Navy sets about its business in these waters, ready to tackle anything and doing it.

Powerfully armed though they are, fast as they can move and slippery as they are in manoeuvre the vessels of coastal forces in which we made this cheeky raid would be rather like David against the Goliath of a capital ship.

But as I looked at the little smile on the lean face of the skipper and remembered how he handled his "fleet" in tricky shallow waters, I had no doubt about the fight he would put up against any sort of enemy. Just for a second I caught myself half wishing it might happen—until I remembered that our job had been done and that it was our remaining business to get home with all on board.

This naval officer is a character. He is the sort of man who weighs the chances and then, having made up his mind, goes in with all he has. Through several months he has been a scourge to Jap craft up and down the Arakan coast and in the tidal rivers cutting through it.



R.I.N. MEN IN BRITISH PORT.—Ship's Company of a Royal Indian Navy vessel marching past during a call at a port in Britain.

He it was who recently drove an enemy launch ashore on the Mayu Peninsula and then, a couple of hours later, rammed and sank another crammed with Jap troops.

This is the kind of leadership to which his officers and ship's company respond like men inspired. I have seen nothing more efficient in any service than the way in which these ships set about a task demanding boldness and judgment.

Many a time during the landing and embarkation of troops it was a case of improvising ways and means, but nothing was too difficult to be done—and quickly. More than one naval officer took a ducking from the wooden seaward end of the pier, part of which I collapsed as we came alongside.

They emerged with dripping clothes, hair and beards—50 per cent of them are bearded—shook themselves like dogs, grinned and got on with the job.

The skipper himself classes them as good "types". To him his fellow men are always "types". These officers and ratings merit his description.

As for the soldiers, they were almost dancing with delight when they came back from the brilliantly successful little action. My last memory of them is seeing them ashore again at their base, surrounded by envious comrades who had not been in the party and whose great thought now is "Wonder if we'll be in on the next show?"

R.I.N.'s Dockyard Facilities

India's Contribution to United Nations' War Effort

ONE of India's contributions to the United Nations' War effort consists in making the Royal Indian Navy's dockyar facilities available to warships of other Navies. These facilities have been fully utilized since hostilities began, but the fall of Singapore greatly increased their importance.

SHIP-BUILDING IN INDIA

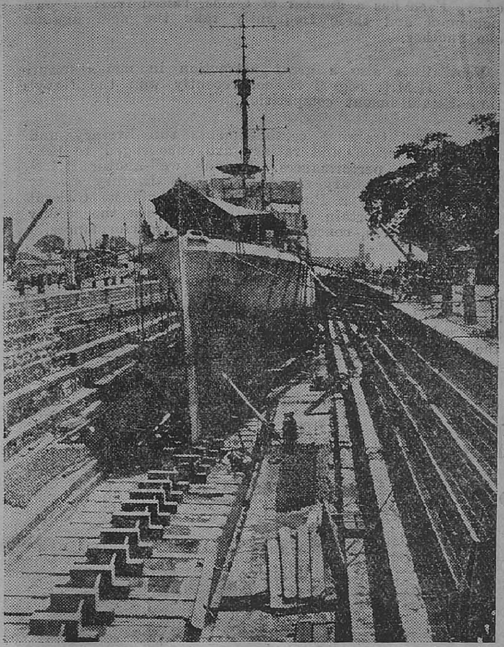
Men-of-war like those that fought in the European conflicts of the period were built and repaired in India as long ago as the seventeenth century. In one port the site of the dockyard was chosen by the first of a distinguished line of Parsee shipbuilders 200 years ago, and in it were constructed warships both for India and the Royal Navy.

During the present war the Royal Indian Navy's dockyard facilities have been used not only for its own vessels but also for repairing and refitting warships of the Royal Navy and the fleets of Allied nations. On a working day some time ago the flags of several of these countries were seen as well as the White Ensign, while beneath them rose the clang of tools and machinery as Indian workmen applied their technical knowledge to the ships' needs. There has been so much to do in recent months that some orders have been diverted to private firms, which, in carrying them out, act under the supervision of R.I.N. dockyard staff.

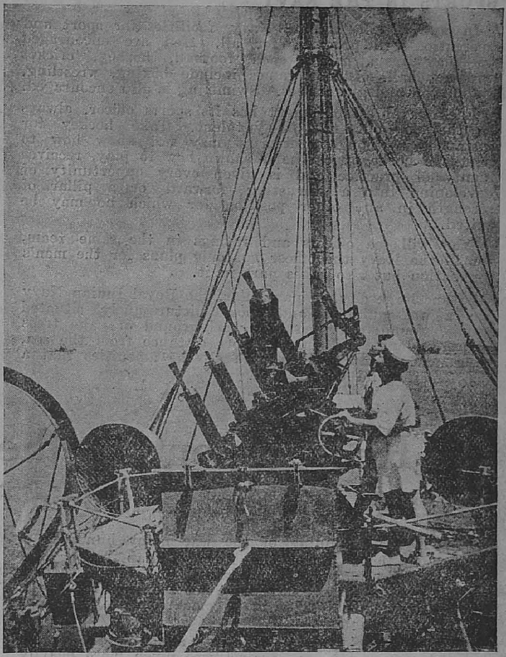
The more complicated types of machinery needed to refit a modern warship come to India from Europe, but a great quantity of Indian material and Indian-made equipment is used every month, including hundreds of tons of Indian steel and large stocks of timber and stores. Orders are also carried out for naval shore establishments, and launches and other craft are built.

WELL-KNIT ORGANIZATION

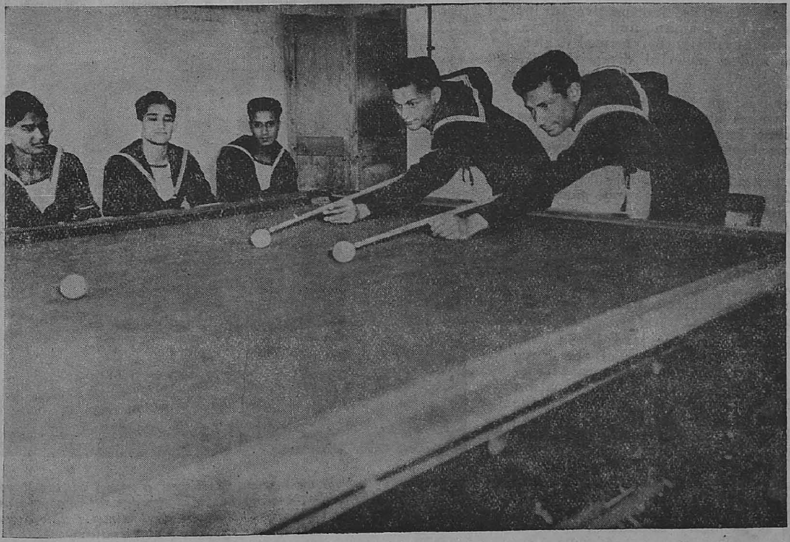
A dockyard is a well-knit organization, and in India each branch has brought its skill and technical knowledge to bear on the problems raised by the increase of work. The Constructive Department deals with repairs to hulls; the Engineering Department attends to engine and boiler rooms, as well as, to some extent, to armament.



IN THE ROYAL INDIAN NAVY.—A sloop of the Royal Indian Navy in dry dock.



A sloop of the Royal Indian Navy taking part in a practice shoot with an aircraft above.



SAILORS OF THE ROYAL INDIAN NAVY TRAINING IN ENGLAND.—Royal Indian ratings under instruction at a training camp in England.

Picture shows a game of billiards in the recreation room.

ELECTRICAL DEPARTMENT

In warships of today electricity plays a most important role; this side of dockyard activities is the concern of the Electrical Department. The stores organization provides a multitudinous variety of items, but those for ships' armament are the responsibility of the Ordnance Group.

The army of workmen is divided into a large number of skilled trades. For these employees' benefit a welfare organization exists, supplying free medical treatment and other facilities.

OWN HOSPITAL

The Royal Indian Navy is to have its own hospital at Bombay. It will be staffed by naval doctors and nurses assisted by sick berth attendants, the Navy's term for hospital orderlies.

The hospital will have ear, nose, throat, ophthalmic and X-ray departments and a laboratory service and there will be a full complement of specialists. The new hospital will be located in the vacant buildings of the Ramesh Premchand Sanatorium.

SPORTS IN THE NAVY

In the Royal Indian Navy facilities for sport and recreation are provided for all. Men are encouraged to play team games such football, hockey, cricket and net ball. Indoor games include boxing, wrestling, badminton and gymnastics. Swimming is also encouraged.

Each naval establishment has its sports officer, always on the look out for likely talent. Take hockey for instance. Although a recruit may not know how to handle a hockey stick, he is shown how to play, receives plenty of practice and is given every opportunity of developing into a thrusting forward or a pillar of strength in any other position for which he may be suited.

You will see officers and ratings in the same team, for in the Navy the officer not only plans for the men's recreation but also takes part in it.

In one large city, in particular, the Royal Indian Navy has a well-equipped and most picturesquely situated sports ground. Framed in a back-ground of palm trees and grassland, and only a short distance from the sea, is a newly built pavilion with all the amenities that a sportsman could desire.

Naval establishments run a Hockey League of their own. Each has a number of teams, raised from its own personnel and these frequently take the field against one another.

Football is also a great attraction in men's leisure hours. H.M.I. Signal School recently won the Navy's Inter-Establishment competition.

Ships and training establishments run literary and dramatic societies, and ratings are encouraged to take part in the performances. In one well-known R.I.N. warship the honorary secretary of the literary society was until recently a Punjabi Petty Officer from Gujerat district. To entertain the men while at sea the society arranged lectures, concerts and dramatic performances.

In one Indian city ratings in training establishments are invited to a cinema show once a week at one of the local cinemas, where they are provided with light refreshments. A local Hospitality Committee has also arranged concert parties and cinema shows in one of the training establishments in addition to the programmes organized by the Recreation Officer.

Recruitment to the Royal Indian Navy

Many Hundreds Join from Madras Presidency

SINCE the beginning of the war many hundreds of persons have joined the Royal Indian Navy from Madras Presidency. Candidates for the various branches of the Service have havé not been confined to the coastal districts only, but have come from every district and from far inland.

When H.M.I.S. *Bengal* went into action in the Indian Ocean in November last against two much more heavily armed Japanese raiders, two out of the gun's crew of seven came from Madras. In every ship and shore establishment the Madrasi is playing his part and making full use of the opportunities and prospects in this rapidly expanding service.

Every man who joins the Navy is, irrespective of his branch, first and foremost a seaman and it follows, therefore, that he must be physically fit, mentally alert and possess commonsense and a cheerful disposition.

SCOPE OF SERVICE

For the young lad who is not very highly educated, but who at least has a sound elementary knowledge of arithmetic and a working knowledge of English, life in the Seaman or Stoker branch offers a wide variety of interesting and useful duties. His general education is continued and supplemented by up-to-date knowledge on all subjects. With forty rupees pay every month in his pocket, and such items as food, accommodation, uniform and medical attendance, provided free, together with all the amenities of the Naval Service, he is given a good start. The rest depends on his own efforts and he is given every encouragement to qualify for advancement. His future career in the service, however, rests upon his professional ability combined with good conduct, character and leadership.

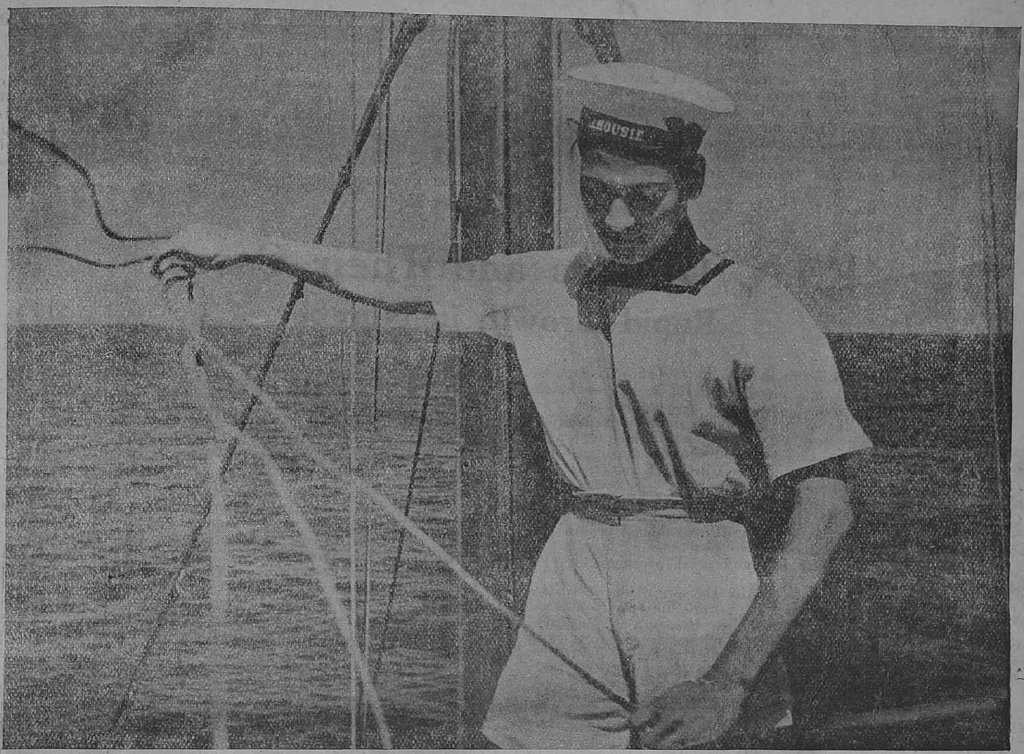
The more highly educated youngster who has passed Matriculation is eligible for other branches of the Navy where the rates of pay are proportionately more attractive according to the higher standard of education required for the branch concerned. In particular, the Communications branch may be mentioned as this requires men of intelligence who can read, write and understand good English. The accurate sending and receiving of messages, whether by visual signalling or wireless telegraphy is a vital part of the routine life of a worship. Without the speedy despatch and receipt of information by means of signalling, the fighting efficiency of Naval units is seriously impaired.

For those who possess the additional qualification of a diploma, degree or certificate in Mechanical or Electrical Engineering, Naval Engineering provides plenty of scope for highly skilled technical work. Full training in specialized subjects such as the work of an Engine Room Artificer, Electrical Artificer or Ordnance Artificer is provided by the Navy. Shipwrights, the Naval equivalent of carpenter-boatbuilders, do not require the additional qualifications mentioned above but should have two or three years' practical experience in carpentry. Preliminary training for Artificers and Shipwrights in the capacity of civilian trainees on a stipend of Rs. 70 per mensem is given at the Technical Training Centre,

A seaman from the west coast of India on a sloop of the Royal Indian Navy. He is using the Aldis Lamp (used in communication with aircraft, etc.). Note his steel helmet. The Royal Indian Navy draws its men from all over India.

Pilani in Jaipur State and candidates for this should apply to the nearest National Labour Service Tribunal or Technical Recruiting Office.

The Navy has two Boys' Training Establishments in Karachi where boys between the ages of 14 and 17 are given a thorough grounding in all naval subjects. In H.M.I.S. *Dilawar*, the Junior School, boys from 11 to 15½ receive a year's educational training before proceeding to the Senior School, H.M.I.S. *Bahadur* for further training in the Seaman, Stoker or Communications Branch, according to their suitability.



A young signalman from Ratnagiri (West Coast) in a minesweeper of the Royal Indian Navy—India's Navy—draws its men from all over the country.

Full particulars regarding these and other branches of the Service which a man can join, such as the Medical, Accountant and Educational brances, are given in an attractive pamphlet "India's Navy," obtainable at any recruiting office where a candidate can apply in person or by letter. At the Recruiting Office he will be medically and educationally examined.

R.I.N. VOLUNTEER RESERVE

Recruitment of officers to the Royal Indian Navy Volunteer Reserve is carried out as follows: Candidates between the ages of 17 and 36 years apply to the nearest Military headquarters or Collector's office and are required to pass through the Provincial Selection Board and then the Central Interview Board. Candidates over 36 are required to apply to the same authority, but in their case they are interviewed by the District or Area Commander within whose military jurisdiction they live. Officers may be elected either for the Executive Engineer, Electrical or Accountant Branches, special qualifications being necessary for entry into the last three branches mentioned. Details are available in the brochure "How to become a Naval Officer" obtainable from the Secretary, Provincial Selection Board, Senate House, Chepauk, Madras. Apart from the necessary educational qualifications the qualities looked for in the potential officer are leadership, enthusiasm and capacity for hard work.

ELEMENTS OF NAVAL LIFE

Naval life is fundamentally different from life ashore. It has its discomforts and hardships to which the newcomer, whether rating or officer, has to accustom himself quickly. The method of dealing with problems which are likely to confront him in the daily routine of naval life or in actual battle at sea is catered for by intensive training and constant practice. Nothing should, therefore, deter the young man from taking up the Navy as a career. He can look forward to a life which is always healthy, worthwhile and full of interest.

Advantages of a Naval Career

THE best age for a boy to join the Royal Indian Navy is between 14 and 16 years. The life of a sailor is known to be one of the healthiest in the world, perhaps because the sea air is fresh, clean and dust-free. A lad who learns the rudiments of seamanship at an early age will find himself at an advantage throughout his Naval career.

A sound educational grounding is an essential part of a boy's Naval training. This is given in H.M.I.S. *Dilawar*, the Junior Boys' Training Establishment of the Royal Indian Navy at Karachi.

It is necessary for all boys on entry to receive a preliminary course in such subjects as Urdu, English, Mathematics, Geography and History to bring them up to a common standard and enable them easily to grasp the more advanced Naval subjects taught in H.M.I.S. *Bahadur*, the Senior Boys' Training Establishment. It is to *Bahadur* that boys go from *Dilawar* before finally embarking on their Naval career at sea.

A boy who wishes to enter the Navy through the Boys' Training Establishments should get into touch with his nearest Recruiting Officer. There are Recruiting Offices at Bangalore, Vellore, Chittoor, Cocanada, Trichinopoly, Coimbatore and Cannanore. There are Technical Recruiting Offices at Bangalore, Madras and Coimbatore. Full information about the conditions of services in the Navy is available from the Head Recruiting Officer in attractive pamphlets and leaflets. Application forms can also be obtained from these authorities.

A boy wishing to join immediately can, provided he possesses his parents' or guardians' written and witnessed consent, be medically and educationally tested on the

spot. A healthy constitution with good eyesight is, of course, necessary.

As regards education, a boy should have a sound knowledge of the first four rules of arithmetic, vulgar fractions and decimal weights and measures. If unable to read and write Urdu, he must have a good working knowledge of English, English, however, is not essential in cases where boys can read and write Urdu satisfactorily—except for the Wireless and Signals Branch of the Navy.

A boy who has never been near the sea before and makes his first journey to Karachi may feel a little strange at the start. His mind is soon set at rest, however, when he finds that he is living in a fine building with every facility for games and entertainment and that he receives good food. Boys are not appointed to ships until they have completed their training. When out rowing or sailing in the harbour they have a good opportunity of learning about the sea as Karachi harbour affords excellent opportunities of training for a Naval career.

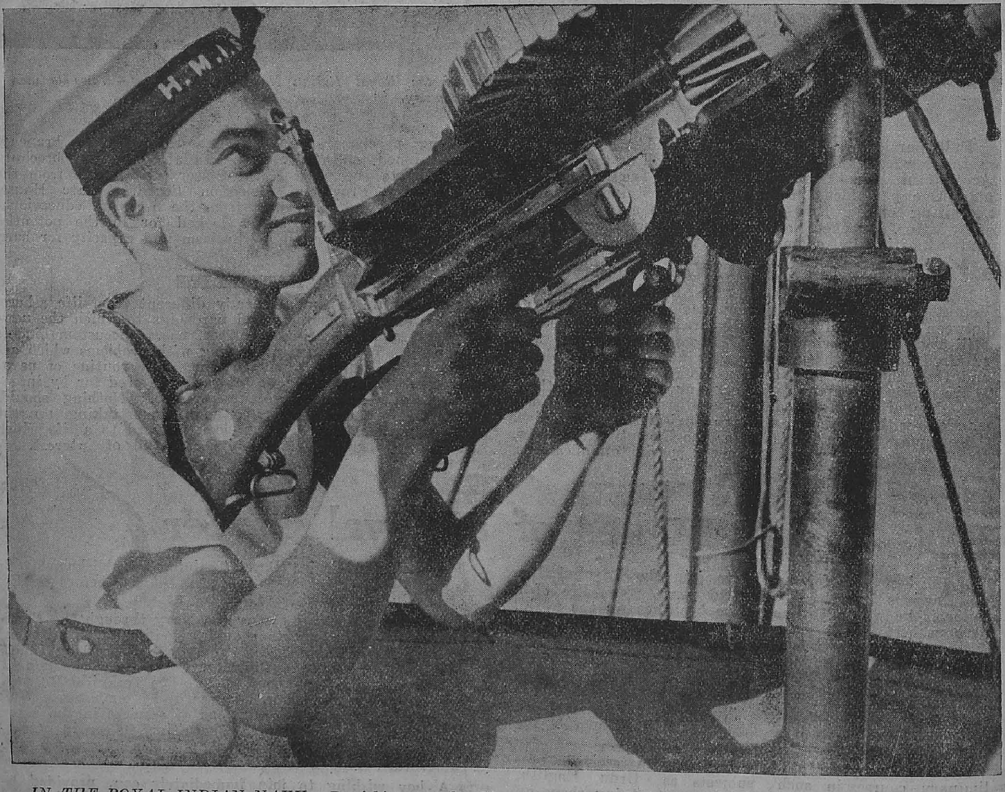
R.I.N. Officers and Their Career

Rapid Growth in Number

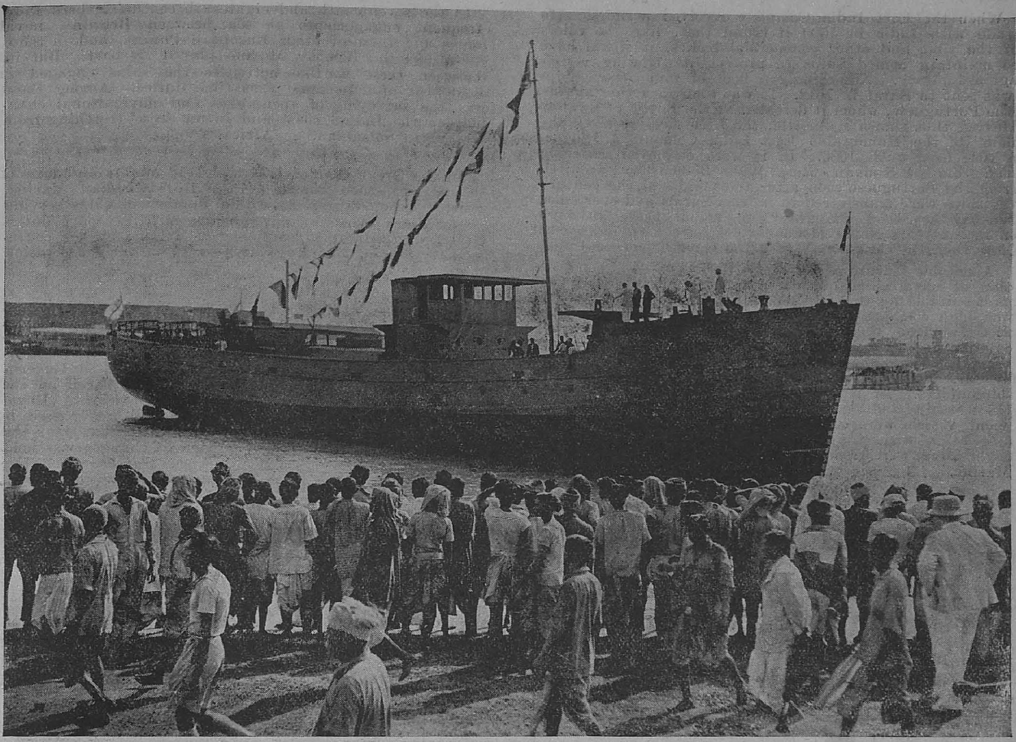
THE number of officers in the Royal Indian Navy has grown rapidly. A limited quota of vacancies in the permanent commissioned cadre is, as before the war, filled periodically as a result of examinations held by the Federal Public Services Commission. Such entrants join the service as Cadets, undergoing training with Britain's Royal Navy in the United Kingdom. The permanent commissioned cadre contains a large proportion of Indians, as the advantages of joining so fine a service were quickly realised. Prominent among those R.I.N. officers who have distinguished themselves in the present war are Indians who in peace time chose a sea career, with its healthy life and good prospects.

The need for more officers in the event of hostilities was, however, so great that permission was obtained shortly before the war to establish Reserves. The Royal Indian Naval Reserve consists of serving officers and warrant officers of the Mercantile Marine, both Indian and European. The Royal Indian Naval Volunteer Reserve is recruited from gentlemen in civilian life, Indian and European, not necessarily having any previous connection with the sea. For these R.I.N.V.R. officers special courses of instruction have been instituted.

Many applications for entry into the Reserves continue to be made every week, and every week appointments are made. Applicants approach the district authorities first, and later appear before the Provincial Selection Board concerned, then the Central Interview Board and finally, for selection, before the Naval Interview Board at Bombay. The pay is good, the work interesting and responsible and the officer is serving his country when it needs his services most. The fact that he may have been a "landlubber" all his life is no bar to his making a successful Naval Officer. He is given the requisite training and all the opportunities he needs. The rest is up to him.



IN THE ROYAL INDIAN NAVY.—Punjabi seaman handling twin Lewis guns on the bridge of a Local Defence Ship of the Royal Indian Navy.



A view of H.M.I.S. Baroda, *the minesweeping submarine chaser, after it had been launched by Lady Russel (wife of Sir Guthrie Russel, Director-General of Munitions Production) at Calcutta on October 22.*

H.M.I.S. "Travancore"

First Ship Built in Indian Yard in July 1941

WHAT of the ships in the Royal Indian Navy? Their number has increased to many times the pre-war figure. On the outbreak of war India set to work to build up her fleet and soon every available building ship was occupied. Every month now you hear of a vessel, sometimes several vessels, being launched. In July 1941 it was H.M.I.S. *Travancore,* the first ship for the Royal Indian Navy to be built in an Indian yard. In October came H.M.I.S. *Baroda.* Since then a stream of new ships has issued from the shipbuilding yards. The development of Indian shipbuilding in response to the R.I.N.'s needs is one of the outstanding features of the country's industrial life.

Meanwhile in shipyards in Great Britain and Australia new construction was taken in hand for the Royal Indian Navy. Among the vessels now in service or under construction, one class, sloops are named after the rivers of India. No order is, however, placed outside India unless it is certain that India's own resources cannot carry it out. Two of the R.I.N.'s sloops commissioned in the United Kingdom in 1941, H.M.I.S. *Jumna* and H.M.I.S. *Sutlej,* have already seen much service in the Atlantic, Dutch East Indies waters, and elsewhere.

In addition to its own ships the Royal Indian Navy has attached to it auxiliary vessels, principally minesweepers, which have been taken over from shipping companies. These are equipped for minesweeping and patrolling, are manned by personnel of the Mercantile Marine who sign on for these war-time duties, and have as officers members of the two Reserves.

The Navy's ships cannot operate without bases, and along the coast-line of India naval facilities have been developed at ports.

Seniormost of India's Defence Services

The Navy: Its Past and Future

THE Royal Indian Navy is historically the seniormost of India's Defence Services, its origin dating as far back as 1612. But it also continues and embodies a tradition built up over many previous centuries. Even in remote times Indian rulers maintained naval forces to protect the coast, and shipping in a more recent era the Moghul Emperors maintained fleets, and the fighting vessels of the Mahrattas won renown on the western coast. It is interesting to note that for many years the seafaring population in the South of Bombay Presidency, particularly the Ratnagiri district, supplied India's naval forces with almost all its ratings. It is still well represented in the Service, although recruitment is now from a much wider area.

When the East India Company received permission to trade with India in 1609 it found that, like the rulers of the time and other commercial bodies, it would have to maintain armed ships to protect its trading vessels against piracy. Accordingly a fleet of four armed ships was sent to Surat in 1612. It was soon in action against the Portuguese, whom it defeated at the Battle of Swalley. Having thus shown its mettle, the little fleet received the name of the Honourable East India Company's Marine, a title used until 1686. In it were employed seafaring men from the Konkan coast. When Bombay was acquired from the Portuguese soon after the middle of the century the ships were transferred to it from Surat, and ever since Bombay has been the Navy's principal base, although in recent years Naval Headquarters have been located at New Delhi in close touch with the Government of India.

A notable feature of this early period was the construction of naval ships of fine quality. India's timber was most suitable for this purpose, and vessels built at Bombay won high commendation in Europe. The first shipbuilder was sent from England, but later the work was carried out under the supervision of a famous Parsee family, the Wadias. The site of the present dockyard was selected by Mr. Nusserwanjee Wadia, the first of these Parsee shipbuilders. In a little over 100 years no fewer than 115 warships and some 144 merchant or unarmed government vessels were constructed there. Owing to its close association with the great western India city India's naval forces were from 1686 to 1830 known as the Bombay Marine.

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries there were frequent engagements at sea between Britain's naval forces and those of other European Powers, and in these operations the Bombay Marine played its part. But in between these warlike activities the ships engaged in a number of important peace-time duties. Among these was the surveying of anchorages and navigational channels on the Indian coast and in an area stretching from Malaya to Somaliland in Africa.

In the Great War of 1914 and 1918 officers and men of the Service, then known as the Royal Indian Marine, assisted in operations at sea, a number of ships serving as auxiliary cruisers and carrying out transport duties. H.M.I.S. *Hardinge* in particular won fame by her courageous action in defending the Suez Canal on the occasion of an attack by the enemy.

After the war financial restrictions severely limited the activities of the Royal Indian Marine. Several schemes for its reorganization were drawn up, and finally one that had been submitted by a committee under Lord Rawlinson was accepted by the Indian and British Governments. This proposed that the Marine be placed on the basis of a combatant service with the title of Royal Indian Navy. In 1934 the necessary Bill was passed by the Central Legislature, and in October of that year the ceremony inaugurating these important changes was held at Bombay.

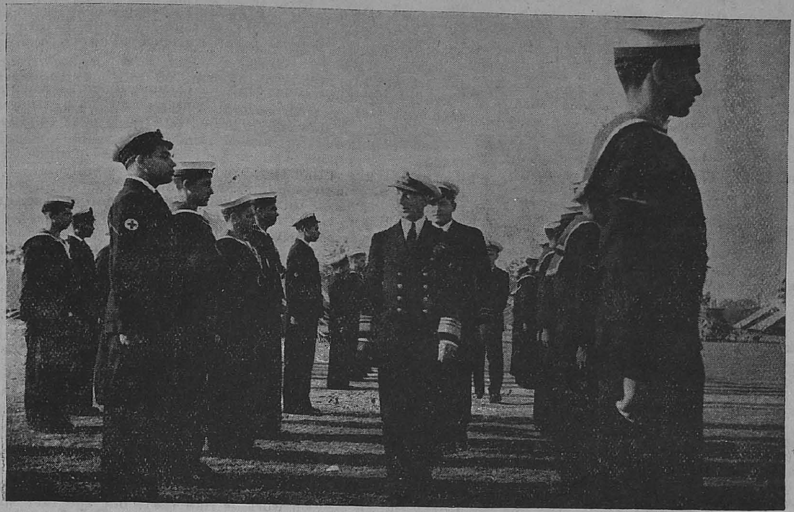
Royal Indian Navy in the Present War

How the White Ensign Frightened Italian War Ships

SHIPS of the Royal Indian Navy have played their part in widely separated theatres of war since September 1939.

Some of them assisted in the operations that led to the downfall of the Italian Empire in East Africa. A notable instance was the reoccupation of Berbera, Somaliland. In the early hours of March 16, 1941, a convoy of warships and troop carriers—the fromer including R.I.N. ships—appeared off the coast in company with tankers and lighters. The Naval forces first reconnoitred the approaches and then bombarded the shore, silencing the Italian guns. The landing of the troops met with hardly any

LADY SRIVASTAVA LAUNCHES R.I.N. VESSEL H.M.I.S. " AGRA ", a minesweeping anti-submarine basset trawler, at Calcutta. The vessel is seen about to leave the dock.



Vice-Admiral Sir Herbert Fitzherbert, Flag Officer Commanding the Royal Indian Navy, inspects the party of Royal Indian Navy officers and men on duty in Delhi in connexion with the forthcoming War Services Exhibition. Walking behind him is Lieut. Commander R. Sawhny, Officer-in-Charge of the Naval Section of the Exhibition. Thirty-five of the men wore badges for overseas service, and one of them, Chief Ordnance Artificer P.C. Mascarenhas, is the holder of the D.S.M., while another was mentioned in despatches.

opposition, and large numbers of the enemy were seen trying to escape even before our troops attacked them. The occupation of Berbera followed without further fighting.

IN THE MIDDLE EAST

During our Army's victorious drive from the Sudan into the Italian Colony of Eritrea H.M. Indian ships helped to maintain the flow of supplies to Indian troops who had pushed in from the coast to attack the left flank of the enemy's position at Keren. They also escorted ships carrying our troops to an improvised base on the Eritrean coast, and in other ways played an important role in the successful campaign.

In the final assault on the port of Massawa India's warships, in conjunction with the Royal Navy, were allotted the task of entering the mine-infested harbour to support our troops. Upon the White Ensign's appearance the Italian warships steamed off in confusion and later scuttled themselves. Some R.I.N. vessels had an adventurous time in passing through enemy minefields, but skilful navigation averted danger, and it was an R.I.N. ship that led the way triumphantly into the Italian port. Another Indian warship was prominent in the operations against the subsidiary Italian port of Assab.

During the brief campaign that followed Nazi intrigues in Iran (Persia) the Royal Indian Navy assisted in conveying troops and supported our troops on shore. At Bandar Shahpur ships of the Royal Indian Navy and Royal Navy steamed up the Khor Musa channel with a force that included Baluchis: when these had landed without opposition, officers and men of the ships turned to five German and three Italian merchant ships and managed to prevent the crews of all but two from scuttling them.

JUMNA SHOOTS JAP BOMBERS

In Dutch East Indies waters after Japan had entered H.M. Indian ships also distinguished themselves. There they were engaged in escorting convoys of merchant ships, often in hazardous conditions. One of them, H.M.I.S. *Jumna*, shot down four Japanese bombers for certain and perhaps destroyed more. She is believed to have been the last warship to leave Batavia before it fell, and it was there she destroyed her first aircraft. She was later given the task of escorting a convoy through the narrow Sundra Straits, where, unable to manœuvre freely she was subjected to repeated attacks by enemy dive-bombers. But her Indian gunners proved equal to the situation, and kept up a heavy fire from their A.A. armament. This broke up the enemy formations, preventing them from inflicting damage on the ships under convoy. Officers and men were in action the whole day and displayed tremendous courage, skill and cheerfulness. At least three more Japanese bombers were destroyed by *Jumna* in this exciting engagement, which ended in the convoy passing safely out into the open sea at night.

Jumna's Gunnery Officer, Lieut. A. J. V. Lecocq received the D.S.C., while two Indian ratings were awarded the D.S.M. and six were mentioned in despatches.

Jumna was one of the R.I.N. ships that earlier participated in the Battle of the Atlantic. At the British Government's suggestion, these ships helped in escorting convoys approaching or leaving the British Isles. In the course of her duties *Jumna* went to probably the most northerly point that an R.I.N. vessel has ever reached, within the Arctic Circle.

THE SUTLEJ IN FORM

Another of H.M.I. ships that did good work in the waters around Singapore and the Dutch East Indies was H.M.I.S. *Sutlej*.

In the Banka Strait an exciting experience befell one of the last north-bound convoys of which she formed part of the escort. The ships were attacked by 27 Japanese bombers. It was a hot action, in which the Japanese met with effective fire from the escorting vessels. The convoy proceeded unscathed.

Two hours after *Sutlej* had brought the first portion of this convoy safely into Singapore harbour, the second portion, whilst still approaching under escort, was heavily dive-bombed by a large force of enemy aircraft. In spite of the escort's concentrated fire, a large transport, formerly a well known passenger vessel, was set on fire. *Sutlej*, which was protecting the transports in the anchorage, helped to prevent the dive bombers from pressing home their attacks on the incoming ships. At the same time by her accurate fire she checkmated repeated attempts to dive-bomb the crowded anchorage. As a result of this engagement the enemy lost five bombers.

When *Sutlej* went to the help of the stricken transport she found many persons in the sea and promptly set about rescue work in conjunction with units of the Royal Australian Navy.

Meanwhile a party from *Sutlej* clambered into the burning ship to ensure that no one was left on board and to remove the depth charges and ammunition. The job done, all returned safely to their ships. The troops in the anchored transports gave *Sutlej* a whole-heated welcome when they saw her back in harbour.

Sutlej was next ordered to proceed to Batavia on escort duty. On the way the ships were attacked by ten Japanese bombers, but the escort gave them such a hot reception that they fled without dropping a single bomb and left one of their number a mass of wreckage in the sea. Later, *Sutlej* helped in the evacuation of thousands of Indian refugees from Burma.

R.I.N. AND BURMA CAMPAIGN

In the Burma campaign many tasks fell to ships of the Royal Indian Navy, and even now the full story of their magnificent work has not been pieced together. They escorted convoys and patrolled constantly; their gunners helped in driving off Japanese aircraft and shelled enemy positions ashore; and in at least one town ratings assisted in maintaining essential services such as electricity and water. When evacuation at points on the coast-line was decided on, they shepherded to safety vessels containing personnel and valuable stores.

It was while on her maiden voyage from the builder's yard in Australia that one of H.M. Indian ships, *Bengal*, won world-wide renown by a gallant action fought in the Indian Ocean 1,000 miles south-west of Java. A vessel of under 1,000 tons mounting a 12 pounder gun in addition to close-range anti-aircraft weapons, she was escorting the "Ondina", a Dutch tanker armed with one 4-inch gun.

H.M.I.S. "BENGAL'S" DIRECT HIT

At midday on November 11, 1942 she sighted a large heavily armed Japanese raider, ten times her size. Following at a distance was yet another Japanese ship of almost similar size and armament. The raiders were each able to bring four 5·5-inch guns to bear at any one time. In the hope of diverting attention from the tanker and to ensure hitting the enemy as hard as possible, *Bengal* proceeded to close the range. Firing began at a distance of two miles and a hot action ensued. The Dutch tanker, although given liberty of action, had gallantly stood by *Bengal* and was also engaging the enemy. Sticking grimly to their task, with their sixth round *Bengal's* gun crew scored a direct hit on the larger of the two raiders, causing an explosion in her stern.

Bengal then came still closer to engage both her adversaries. The first raider blew up and sank: the second continued firing but from a distance. As her ammunition was almost exhausted, *Bengal* withdrew under a smoke screen. The tanker had meanwhile been damaged by torpedoes and gun-fire, and her crew had decided to abandon her, but seeing the remaining raider making off, they boarded her again and brought her safely to port. *Bengal* received some damage but suffered no casualties. For this gallant action the Commanding Officer, Lieutenant Commander W. J. Wilson, R.I.N.V.R., received the D.S.O., two Indian ratings the I.O.M., and six Indian members of the gun crew the I.D.S.M. Two officers were mentioned in despatches.

In the early months of 1943 the Royal Indian Navy's Coastal Forces figured in the news of the Burma operations. The vessels employed consist of some of the Navy's smaller units, but though not of great size they are fast and well-armed. To our troops pushing down the Arakan Coast they rendered useful assistance by intercepting enemy craft transporting troops and supplies. The principal scene of their exploits was the Mayu peninsula with the Mayu river running behind it down to the Bay of Bengal. In two night actions at the end of January one of the Navy's little ships chased and drove an enemy coastal craft ashore and later rammed and sank another, at least 50 Japanese perishing. Next month the raid on Myebon was in the news Transported by some of the Coastal Forces' vessels, a small force of our troops landed at Japanese-held Myebon, 60 miles south-east of Akyab, and blew up jetties, godowns and dumps before returning safely with several Indians who asked to be taken back. A few days later, off Ramree island, our vessels engaged two armed enemy launches heavily loaded with troops and ammunition. One launch was destroyed, the other left in a sinking condition, and over 50 Japanese soldiers were killed and a number captured. Patrol duties along the Arakan Coast and in the Mayu river area were constantly undertaken; and as a variation one of the Navy's vessels bombarded the Japanese stronghold at Denbaik. During these months Coastal Forces rendered most useful assistance to our troops and to their task European and Indian Naval personnel brought enthusiasm, skill and initiative.

THE VIGILANT WATCH AT SEA

This brief account outlines a part of the Royal Indian Navy's record in the present war, a part that lends itself to description because it contains exciting incidents. But month after month Royal Indian Navy ships carry out their duties of escorting convoys, patrolling the coast and seas and minesweeping, work arduous in the extreme—and no incident occurs that will make headlines in newspapers. Much of the Royal Indian Navy's work is like that, but the fact that it does not attract public attention does not mean that it is not an essential part of India's war effort. The reverse is the case. Because the Royal Indian Navy does its job thoroughly, ships can enter our ports without fear of mines, convoys can pass to and fro under sure protection, a ceaseless patrol is kept in the waters around India's coast. All this is its daily routine, and the public does not hear much about it because the Navy is by tradition "The Silent Service" and in any event there is not much "news" about routine happenings. But this vigilant watch at sea is a very large contribution to India's defence. So whenever you read of some gallant acion by a Royal Indian Navy ship, think also of the many other Royal Indian Navy ships, officers and men at sea. They are also doing work that is important, even though they are not mentioned in the newspapers.

IN THE ROYAL INDIAN NAVY.—An officer of a minesweeper takes a sight. Behind him with a note book, pencil and desk watch, is a fine young specimen of the seamen, the west coast of India supplies to the Royal Indian Navy.

H.M.I.S. "Bengal's" Baptism of Fire

Gallantry Against Great Odds

THE story of H.M.I.S. *Bengal's* battle with two more heavily armed Japanese raiders is one of the most dramatic that operations in the Indian Ocean have so far yielded.

Knowing full well the heavy odds against them, these officers and men of the Royal Indian Navy skilfully took on both raiders in a successful endeavour to save a vulnerable oil tanker.

For H.M.I.S. *Bengal* it was a veritable baptism of fire, for she had been launched only a few months previously in Australia and was on her first voyage to India. She is a vessel under 1,000 tons designed for minesweeping and anti-submarine work. Her armament consists of a 12-pounder gun and some close-range anti-aircraft guns. At the time she was escorting a Dutch tanker, the M.V. *Ondina*, of 6,341 tons, which was armed with a four-inch gun. During the engagement those on board *Ondina* gallantly assisted *Bengal* in keeping the raiders under fire as long as they could.

Ranged against the India warship and the tanker she was escorting were two much larger and more heavily armed vessels of 10,000 and 6,863 tons respectively. Each Japanese raider is believed to have mounted six 5·5 inch guns and to have been able to bring a broadside of four of them to bear at any one time. These guns fired high explosive shells twice the diameter and six times the weight of the shells from *Bengal's* 12-pounder. The raiders were also equipped with torpedo tubes and aircraft.

Against such odds, H.M.I.S. *Bengal's* soundest tactics were to steam as close to the enemy as possible, to make certain that her shells hit the mark and caused the maximum damage. That was the course adopted by the Commanding Officer (Lieutenant-Commander W. J. Wilson, Royal Indian Naval Reserve).

The first Japanese raider was sighted, eight miles distant, shortly before noon on November 11 in a lonely part of the Indian Ocean. H.M.I.S. *Bengal* was ready for action. A few minutes later, a second speck on the horizon proved to be the other raider. *Bengal's* Commanding Officer made a decision calling for the highest courage and determination.

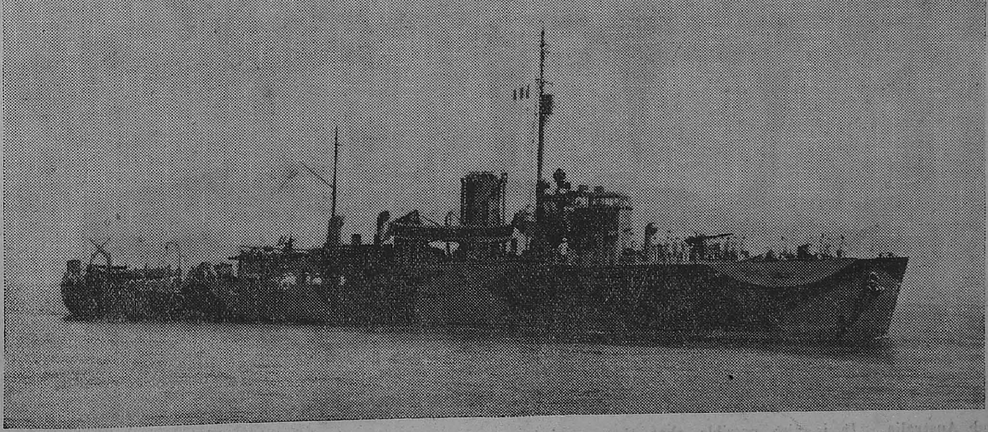
Notwithstanding the odds against him, he decided to steam towards the enemy, hoping by this means to divert their attention and enable the tanker to make her escape. Increasing to full speed, he went straight for the nearer and larger of the two raiders, and at a range of 3,500 yards—two land miles—the firing began. With true seaman's gallantry, the master of the Dutch tanker, although he had been given liberty to take what action he pleased, stood by and also engaged the enemy. Working like men inspired, *Bengal's* Indian gunners maintained a high rate of fire against the four gun broadside of their opponent. After their sixth round they were rewarded by an explosion and a large fire breaking out evidently in the enemy's ammunition magazine aft. The second raider now joined in the fight.

As a single hit might have had serious consequences, H.M.I.S. *Bengal's* Commanding Officer skilfully manœuvred his ship to prevent the enemy from getting the range. With shells falling all round, this was not easy, but by constantly altering course, he puzzled the enemy and saved his ship from damage at this stage while keeping up a steady rate of fire. As a result of these manœuvres the range shortened to 2,500 yards By now, the 10,000 ton raider, hit on the bridge superstructure and stern, was enveloped in flames.

Observing that the second raider was damaging the tanker, *Bengal* went to draw her off. By this time much of the ammunition on board the Indian warship and the tanker had been expended in their brave fight, while the second Japanese raider had plenty left. In the ensuing engagement *Bengal* was herself hit, and her ammunition began to run short, while on the tanker—which had been damaged and whose master had already been killed—all ammunition was soon expended. In these circumstances, the tanker's crew abandoned ship, the Japanese machine-gunning them in the water.

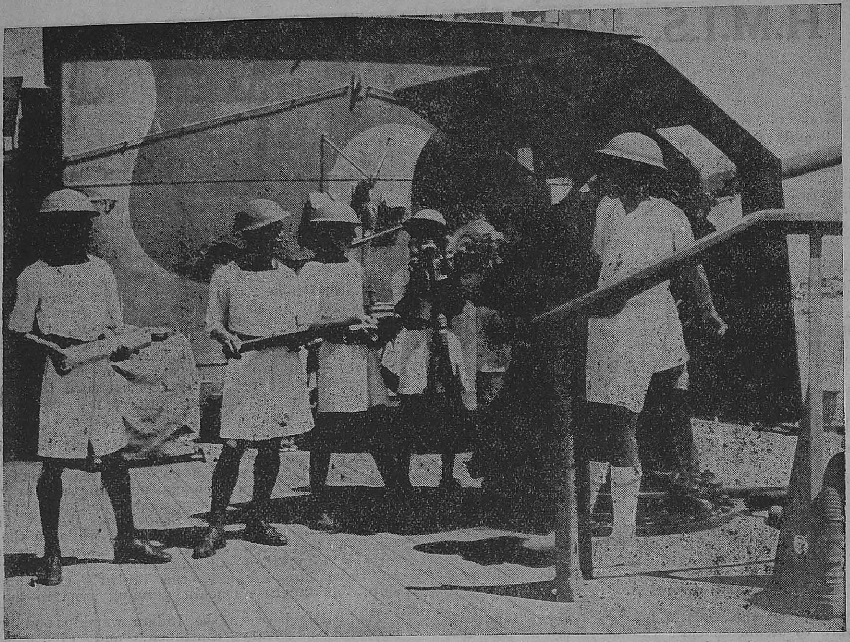
The battle between the Indian warship and her more powerful adversary continued, and eventually seven miles separated them from the *Ondina*. The first raider now sank stern first after a violent explosion, and her consort steamed towards her to pick up survivors. To pursue her was for *Bengal* an impossibility as only a few rounds of ammunition remained. Observing that the *Ondina* was now well out of range, *Bengal* made a smoke screen to cover her own withdrawal. The remaining Japanese raider, however, had had enough and after taking on board the survivors from her consort, made off. Thereupon the tanker's crew returned to their vessel and managed to get her under way again.

The result of this struggle in mid-ocean was the loss to Japan of a 10,000 ton raider whose activities might well have led to serious loss of Allied shipping. She and her consort were certainly equipped to fight anything less powerful than a cruiser, and they must have carried stores to enable them to remain many weeks at sea on the routes linking India with South Africa



One of the most dramatic engagements in naval history was fought in a lonely part of the Indian Ocean shortly before noon on November 11, 1942, H.M.I.S. Bengal, *a vessel of under 1,000 tons designed for minesweeping and anti-submarine work, which was escorting a Dutch Tanker, engaged successfully two Japanese raiders which were ten times her size and far more heavily armed, sinking one and driving the other away.*

H.M.I.S. Bengal *entering port after the battle with the Japanese raiders.*



The photograph shows the gallant gun crew of H.M.I.S. Bengal *at action stations at the 22-pounder gun. Three of these Royal Indian Navy men come from Bombay Presidency, two from Madras Presidency and two from the Punjab.*

The photograph taken in port after the battle, shows Lieutenant-Commander W. J. Wilson, Royal Indian Naval Reserve, (third from the right) and other officers of H.M.I.S. Bengal. *This Royal Indian Navy warship engaged two Japanese raiders, which were ten times her size and far more heavily armed, in a successful endeavour to save a tanker she was escorting. She sank one 10,000-ton raider. The officers are holding "Souvenirs" of the battle—pieces of shrapnel found on the decks.*

and Australia. It is also possible that they carried supplies for enemy submarines operating in the Indian Ocean. Whichever was their primary purpose—raids on commerce or the re-fuelling and re-victualling of submarines—they had evidently set out on a mission to which the enemy attached great importance.

According to an estimate, two hundred rounds of high explosive shell were directed at *Bengal*. In the face of this barrage her ship's company behaved with resolute courage. They hit back, they saved the vessel they were escorting, they won through. From His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief in India and the Flag Officer Commanding the Royal Indian Navy, Vice-Admiral Sir Herbert Fitzherbert, they have received messages of congratulation on the gallant action they fought.

One of the most dramatic engagements in naval history was fought in a lonely part of the INDIAN OCEAN shortly before noon on November 11, 1942. H.M.I.S. Bengal, *a vessel of under 1,000 tons designed for minesweeping and anti-submarine work, which was escorting a Dutch tanker, engaged successfully two Japanese raiders which were ten times her size and far more heavily armed, sinking one and driving the other away.*

Lieutenant-Commander W. J. Wilson, Royal Indian Naval Reserve, Commanding Officer, H.M.I.S. Bengal.

A public reception was accorded in Bombay to the crew of H.M.I.S. Bengal *which recently made history in the Indian Ocean by engaging successfully two heavily armed Japanese raiders ten times the size of the* Bengal *sinking one and driving the other away. His Excellency the Governor of Bombay took the salute and the men were thereafter entertained to lunch by the Sheriff of Bombay at the Cowasji Jehangir Hall where many prominent people were present. Photo shows men of H.M.I.S.* BENGAL *marching past.*

D.S.O. for "Bengal's" Captain

FOR services during H.M.I.S. *Bengal's* successful action, fought on November 11 last in company with the Dutch tanker "Ondina", against two heavily armed Japanese raiders, the following awards to personnel of the Royal Indian Navy were approved:—

D.S.O.

Lieutenant (Acting Lieutenant-Commander) William Joseph Wilson, Royal Indian Navy Reserve, Commanding Officer, H.M.I.S. *Bengal*.

I.O.M. (2nd CLASS)

No. 2649 Acting Petty Officer Mohammed Ibrahim.
No. 6602 Able Seaman Ragunath Sohae.

I.D.S.M.

No. 4482 Leading Steward Parekal Krishnan Nair.
No. 4646 Able Seaman Ismail Mohammed.
No. 5969 Able Seaman Mohammed Khan.
No. 5303 Able Seaman Ismail Baba.
No. 7830 Ordinary Seaman Balachandra.
No. 4627 Leading Telegraphist M. Dinshaw.

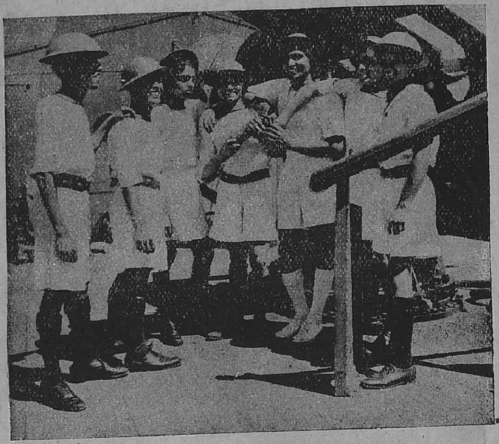
MENTIONS IN DESPATCHES

Lt.-Commander (E) J. Coverdale-Smith, R.I.N.
Lieutenant Jai Shankar Mehra, R.I.N.R.

Lieutenant-Commander Wilson received the D.S.O. for the gallantry, skill and resolution he displayed in action against the two enemy vessels, one of which was sunk. His ship mounted only a 12-pounder gun, while each of his adversaries possessed a broadside of four 4·7-inch or 5·5 inch guns. Despite these odds he at once closed to within 3,500 yards of the first raider in order to cover the tanker, and handled H.M.I.S. *Bengal* with coolness and skill, avoiding serious damage to her.

Petty Officer Mohammed Ibrahim was Captain of the Gun, in charge of the gun's crew, while Able Seaman Ragunath Sohae was the gunlayer, responsible for laying and firing H.M.I.S. *Bengal's* 12-pounder. Setting an excellent example of steadiness and resolution under fire, they used their weapon to the very best advantage, even after an enemy shell had struck *Bengal* under the gun position.

Leading Steward P. K. Nair, Able Seaman Ismail Mohammed, Able Seaman Mohammed Khan, Able Seaman Ismail Baba and Ordinary Seaman Balachandra were members of the gallant gun's crew.



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The gun crew of H.M.I.S. Bengal: *a photograph taken in port after the battle. "No praise is great enough for their magnificent conduct in face of the greatest danger." In those words the Commanding Officer summed up their shipmates' tribute to the gunners.*

Leading Telegraphist Minoo Dinshaw manned the wireless telegraph set throughout the action, clearing all signals promptly and accurately.

Lieutenant-Commander (E) J. Coverdale-Smith did magnificent work while in charge of the engine room and boiler room complements and also with repair parties during and after the action.

Lieutenant Jai Shankar Mehra rendered his Commanding Officer every assistace in his capacity as First Lieutenant of the ship. He displayed coolness and efficiency under fire and in supervising repair parties and keeping his Commanding Officer informed of the situation.

SAILORS OF THE ROYAL INDIAN NAVY TRAINING IN ENGLAND.—Royal Indian Naval ratings under instruction at a training Camp in England.

Picture shows Indian ratings leaving the camp with their gear at the end of the training period. They are now ready for service.

H.M.I.S. "Jumna's" Battle with Bombers

First-class Show in Accordance with High Standard

Chief Ordnance Artificer P. C. Mascarenhas of the Royal Indian Navy who was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal for the coolness with which he repaired the ship's guns during H.M.I.S. Jumna's *action against Japanese aircraft in February last year.*

THE part played by R.I.N. ships in the war is illustrated by the following account of H.M.I.S. *Jumna's* experiences in the Java Sea. The story is of H.M.I.S. *Jumna's* day-long battle with Japanese dive-bombers while protecting a convoy in the dangerous waters of the Sunda Straits between Java and Sumatra. Details that have become known have aroused the greatest admiration throughout the Royal Indian Navy, which has been expressed in the following signal from the Flag Officer Commanding, Vice-Admiral Sir Herbert Fitzherbert:—

"Please convey to all officers and the ship's company my heartiest congratulations on the first class show that *Jumna* put up on 24th and 28th February. It is fully in accordance with the high standard I expect from the Royal Indian Navy and we are all extremely proud of you."

H.M.I.S. *Jumna*, one of our latest sloops, is believed to have been the last warship to leave Batavia before it fell. In her various encounters with the Japanese she destroyed four bombers for certain, and perhaps more. Her work was carried out in conditions of great danger. More than once powerful units of the Japanese Navy were in the vicinity. At this time, elsewhere in these waters, was taking place the Battle of the Java Sea, in which the part played by H.M.S. *Exeter* and other gallant ships is already known to the public.

With this exciting experience *Jumna* rounded off a spell of continuous duty that took her from the far North Atlantic to the Netherlands East Indies. In the Atlantic she was engaged in convoying. She has been to the Faroe Islands, where the midnight sun astonished some of the ratings; the Commanding Officer had to explain the phenomenon in detail.

This was probably farther north than any Royal Indian Navy ship has ever been.

After several months of convoy duties *Jumna* proceeded round the Cape to the Mediterranean Station. There she had an uneventful time until Japan entered the war, when she was ordered to Singapore as part of the China Force. There she was employed in escorting convoys of incoming troopships, and afterwards, when the situation became serious, in getting them away from Singapore to Java. This was exciting work, among minefields and with Japanese air raids going on all the time. These attacks, however, were mild affairs compared with what came afterwards when the enemy started raiding the dock area at Batavia.

It was on the day of her arrival in Batavia that *Jumna* bagged her first Japanese aircraft. This was during a determined dive-bombing attack by waves of naval planes that descended to 1,500 feet dropping bombs and firing incessantly with machine guns. One that her gun crews definitely shot down approached on the port beam and dropped its bombs just ahead of her, but the Royal Indian Navy vessel, blazing away with her main anti-aircraft armament and lighter weapons, put paid to the Jap's account with an high explosive shell that burst just in front of him.

The situation was getting critical, as it was known that Japanese land forces were near. The Commander was given the task of escorting the last convoy to leave Batavia before the invader entered. This left at midnight and proceeded westwards to the Sunda Straits at the northern end of which the "fun" began early the following day.

Enemy aircraft made continuous attacks on *Jumna* and the other escort, H.M.A.S. *Yarra*, also on the line of merchant ships loaded with stores and evacuees. Dive-bombers came over in formations of from three to six at regular and brief intervals, dropping bombs and firing bullets and projectiles from machine guns and cannon. Each attack lasted about half an hour, followed by a pause, and then the Japanese again came in search of their prey. Unable to manœuvre freely in narrow waters the convoy was at a manifest disadvantage and the Japanese airmen pressed home their attacks with determination. Realizing from the volume and accuracy of her fire that *Jumna* was a tough opponent, they concentrated on her. Each wave of bombers dropped both heavy and light bombs, which fell within 15 feet from the ship's side seeming to lift the ship out of the water, but *Jumna* gave back better than she received, her gun crews often drenched with spray keeping up a heavy fire that broke up the enemy formations and prevented them from inflicting any damage on the ships under convoy during the whole time she was with them. *Jumna* herself was straddled by bombs on several occasions but had only slight damage from near misses, and no casualties although the deck was covered with bomb fragments.

The ship's company were in action the whole day, and in the inferno of concentrated fire that the Japanese created for them, their behaviour, in the words of the Commanding Officer, was magnificent. Everyone carried out his arduous duties with the utmost cheerfulness. In particular, the men handling the close range weapons showed splendid discipline in holding their fire until the enemy were close enough to be hit. In the engine room where the battle could not be seen, admirable work was done in executing promptly such repairs as were necessary. *Jumna* used her armament to such good purpose that she had the satisfaction of destroying three more of the enemy aircraft. The first was hit by a 4-inch shell and blew up in the air. Later two others were "bagged" and a fourth was "downed."

An eye-witness said that the last attack "was perhaps the most ferocious of all, Junkers 88s roaring in from three sides bombing and machine-gunning. One flew over the funnel, down which it seemed as if one of the bombs had dropped. It was most unpleasant. You could see *Jumna's* tracer bullets hitting the fuselage. Aircraft zoomed in simultaneously or in quick succession and the combined fire of these churned the sea round the Royal Indian Navy vessel as if a terrific rain-storm was in progress, and the din was ear-splitting."

As night approached, the enemy slackened off, and at night-fall the convoy reached the open sea. Air raids then ceased, but other dangers awaited the *Jumna*. Suddenly out of pitch darkness, a submarine attack developed, and torpedoes were fired at the convoy of merchant ships. The escort promptly went into action with depth charges, with sufficient result to prevent further attack. The convoy only just escaped further contact with the enemy as only two hours after it had passed the northern part of the Straits a Japanese force landed at Banten Bay; and this force was escorted by heavy cruisers.

Jumna left the convoy south of Java as arranged and was ordered back into the Sumatran danger zone on another important mission. However, apart from sighting a solitary Japanese plane, the voyage was without incident.

The Commanding officer ascribes *Jumna's* good fortune in having no damage done to her and no casualties aboard to the presence of a sprig of white heather from the banks of Loch Lomond. That heather was presented to him when leaving Scotland and has crossed the Equator many times. Others on board feel that it was "Blitz," the ship's black cat, who brought them luck. During those exciting hours in the Sunda Straits, "Blitz," who hails from Glasgow, was seen prowling the decks and watching the enemy's proceedings with the disdainful air of one who knows he has nine lives and that it will take more than the Japanese to deprive him of them.

Awards for "Jumna" Heroes

AN officer of the Royal Indian Navy was awarded the D.S.C. and two ratings received the D.S.M. for devotion to duty during Japanese air attacks in February 1942, when H.M.I.S. *Jumna* was engaged in convoy work in the Dutch East Indies. *Jumna* shot down four Japanese aircraft for certain and probably another. The awards are as follows:—

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE CROSS

Lieutenant Alastair Jaffery Victor LeCocq, R.I.N. V.R., to whose ability as Gunnery Officer, says the *London Gazettee*, the destruction of the Japanese planes was mainly due.

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE MEDAL

O. No. 2282, Chief Ordnance Artificer Peter Cajetan Mascarenhas, who carried out repairs to guns during dive-bombing and machine-gun attacks, showing great devotion to duty.

O. No. 3249, Leading Seaman Khan Mohammed, who displayed skill and initiative in engaging individual aircraft with an Oerlikon gun.

MENTIONED IN DESPATCHES

Six ratings who were serving in H.M.I.S. *Jumna* at the time are mentioned in despatches. They are:—

O. No. 2348, Petty Officer, Mohammed Yaqub.

O. No. 2227, Petty Officer, Mohammed Shamsher.

O. No. 2304, Petty Officer, Sayed Mohammed.

O. No. 2499, Petty Officer, Sher Ali.

O. No. 2871, Electrical Artificer III, Douglas Henry Reeves.

O. No. 432, Chief Stoker, Ahmed Abdul Rehman.

They showed "Devotion to duty during heavy and continuous dive-bombing attacks," says the *Gazette*.

In an interview a member of the ship's company retold the dramatic story of *Jumna's* action in the Dutch East Indies on that eventful 28th of February. Four days previously the R.I.N. warship had shot down her first enemy bomber.

The black menace of attack by the Japanese hung over Batavia at midnight when *Jumna* and another warship left the port with orders to escort six merchant ships carrying valuable cargoes.

We entered the Sunda Straits at 6-30 a.m., he said and we weren't left in peace long. Japanese land-based planes had smelt us out.

At 7-45 thirty of them came over at a low level to bomb and machine-gun us. The air was full of flying lead, and my ears were ringing with the din.

As fast as they unloaded their bombs and emptied their machine-gun belts, back to their bases they went to reload and come at us again.

During the second attack, which started at 10 a.m., *Jumna* drew her first blood.

Planes came hurtling down at us from all quarters, and one of them let go a stick of bombs that looked as if it must fall straight down the funnel. Apparently, however, the enemy was put off his aim by a burst from our machine-guns, for we could see the bullets ripping through the fuselage. The plane straightened out and tried to get away astern. Our gunners let it have a packet smack in the middle, and it dropped into the sea two miles away.

An hour later back the enemy came, and this time it was 'A' gun that knocked one into the sea.

And so it went on, with periodical attacks right up till dusk. By that time we knew that at least four Japanese planes and probably another would never again attack a convoy, while others would need patching up before they would be of much use again. All the ships we were escorting got through the Sunda Straits untouched.

R.I.N. Ship Hunts Submarine

Saves Convoy in Heavy Sea

DETAILS of a Royal Indian Navy vessel's pursuit of an enemy submarine somewhere in the waters around India were lately released.

Earlier this year, one of H.M.I. ships was escorting a convoy in heavy seas and a strong wind that caused her to pitch and roll and ship much water over her bows. Towards evening the weather grew worse, and, taking advantage of this, a submerged submarine torpedoed a ship on the wing of the convoy.

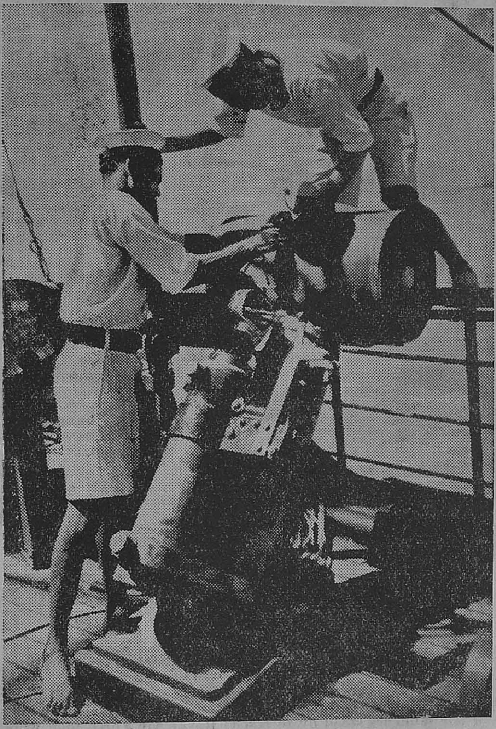
Going into action at once, the R.I.N. vessel turned beam on to sea and wind in order to reduce pitching and conduct the hunt more advantageously. The pounding of the seas caused her to list heavily, but despite the difficulties she made several attacks with depth charges on the lurking enemy.

At the same instant as the second attack a bubble of air, 12 feet in diameter, was observed to rise to the surface of the sea accompanied by a considerable quantity of oil.

In the gathering darkness and bad weather it was not possible to ascertain what became of the submarine, although the R.I.N. vessel searched a wide area; but her prompt counter-attack had saved the convoy from being further molested, and the absence of any more attempts on the torpedoed ship, which remained afloat, suggests that the submarine may have been damaged.

Little Ships' Great Record in the Arakan

Vital Job of the "Wavell's Navy"



IN THE ROYAL INDIAN NAVY.—Escort ships of the R.I.N. all carry depth charge throwers for use against submarines. This thrower hurls the charge 40 yards on the beam. It explodes under the surface of the water and damages any submarine within range.

TWO words, "The Navy," have been heard a great deal during recent months of campaigning in Arakan. The words cover not only the Royal Navy but also the Royal Indian Navy, the Burma Navy and even the little fleet of cargo and passenger-carrying river steamers skippered by Army Officers and sometimes known as "Wavell's Navy'.

All these, in their different roles, have rendered gallant service along the coast to Akyab and beyond, or in broad tidal rivers like the Naf and the Mayu. Their achievements have provided some of the brightest episodes in the past season's operations against the Japanese, writes an Indian Army Observer.

From a spectacular point of view, pride of place goes to the swift hard-hitting launches of coastal forces of the Royal Indian and Burma Navies which have scored success after success against the enemy, scourging his coastal shipping and occasionally raiding key points on land.

Low, rakish-looking craft, powerfully motored and packed with weapons, some are constructed in Indian yards. They have British, Indian and Burmese officers and crews who have proved their courage and the soundness of their training over and over again.

SUCCESSFUL ENCOUNTERS

High-lights of their activities have been a smashing raid on Japanese-occupied Myebon, in Hunter's Bay, 50 miles south-east of Akyab; the definite sinking of one, and probably two, ships laden with Japanese reinforcements and ammunition in a night action off Ramree Island in the same area; a moonlight battle off the Mayu Peninsula in which an enemy launch was rammed and sunk and another driven ashore; and two or three sharp bombardments of Japanese land positions at Donbaik.

In between times, they have harried the enemy in many daring ways, killed several scores of Japanese, and brought back valuable prisoners who were saved from the water when their ships were blown from under them.

Five of these were picked up in the Ramree engagement at the end of February. Several launches were on the prowl that night, but only one of them was in action. At the end of an hour and a half, she had riddled with gunfire, set ablaze and sunk a 90 feet long enemy vessel, and badly damaged a similar Japanese ship which was not seen again after catching fire. The death roll among the Japanese troops on their way to Akyab was at least 45.

A few nights earlier Myebon, an important place used as a port of call by the Japs, was destroyed partly by fire from the launches and partly by British troops who went ashore armed with petrol and explosives, which they employed to produce a line of fires three-quarters of a mile long. A beached river steamer and a number of large sampans were also blown to bits that night.

ENEMY LAUNCH RAMMED

The episode in which an enemy launch was rammed in good old-fashioned style occurred about a month earlier. This time only one of our launches was concerned. Slipping down the coast of the Mayu Peninsula one moonlight night, she chased and sent ashore near Donbaik a small Jap vessel which was certainly put out of action for a long time.

Sailing on, the Commander and his men found more adventure when they reached the mouth of the Mayu river and were close to a mangrove-fringed creek in the northern part of Akyab Island. They were exactly on the Japanese ferry supply route between Akyab Island and the Peninsula when they saw what seemed to be a thicket-covered island.

It proved to be a densely camouflaged 78-feet launch, crammed with soldiers. A fierce encounter followed, and an hour and a half later, the enemy was at the bottom of the river after being rammed, raked with fire and set ablaze. At least 50 troops lost their lives, a number being cut up in the water by our craft's propellers. Which gives all the more meaning to the Commander's tribute to his men: "My Indian ratings behaved extremely well in this their first taste of action.".

Of the Donbaik bombardments, one was carried out by a single ship, and two others (coinciding with a land attack on March 18) by larger numbers. They provoked the Jap into energetic response with guns and mortars, but clever manœuvring kept all the launches out of trouble.

Launches of the Burma Navy, smaller craft manned by enthusiastic Burmans and Anglo-Burmans, have proved just the thing for river work, first in the Naf and later in the Mayu, up which they slipped one misty night in January under the nose of the Japs at Rathedaung.

They have been active ever since, patrolling, intercepting cross-river traffic and occasionally taking part in lively encounters. One of their best actions was that in which, during the early stages of the recent enemy push northwards of Rathedaung, they shot up and sank 14 sampans, some of them containing reinforcements. A few days later, when it became necessary to evacuate the village of Htizwe, they were in the picture again, taking off troops and supplies and disembarking them further north.

TRANSPORT WORK

Less spectacular but doing a vital job with great efficiency, the little ships of "Wavell's Navy" have carried up and down the Naf river and elsewhere thousands of tons of supplies and large numbers of men. And that their Indian crews possess the fighting spirit if the need and the opportunity occur was shown only a few days ago when two 120 feet vessels were attacked by ten Japanese aircraft and hit back with their machine-guns so vigorously that one bomber was sent crashing into the river and another made off damaged.

In all this fine record of achievement, which has done much to help our British and Indian land forces, few casualties and only minor damage to craft are entered on the debit side. The balance has been overwhelmingly in our favour.

R.I.N. and Burma Campaign

Courage and Resourcefulness of Indian Seamen

FURTHER information can now be given about the part played in the Burma campaign by the Royal Indian Navy and Burma Navy. Many officers and men of the Burma Navy are now serving with the R.I.N. Their experience will be of great value both in the protection of this country's coast and in future operations against the Japanese.

When the enemy were coming dangerously close, motor launches of the Burma Navy evacuated civil and military personnel, including the staffs of light-houses, from the islands of the Mergui Archipelago and Moulmein and Tavoy. These operations were often carried out under fire from the enemy's aircraft and forces ashore, and in extremely bad weather. In intervals between their errands of mercy, commanding officers found time to intercept country boats manned by the enemy, and also removed to Rangoon craft that would have been of use to the Japanese.

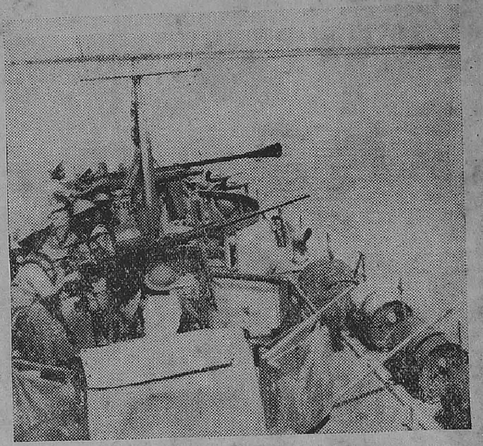
On land operations approaching Rangoon, Burma's naval forces patrolled the delta, swept for mines and gave warning of hostile bombers' proximity. On at least one occasion a motor launch captured a country boat containing Japanese officers and armed Burmese hooligans. Officers and men of the Burma Navy also joined in unloading the cargoes of vessels in port, working continuously for days. Later, when the evacuation of Rangoon was decided upon, they assisted in taking many river craft to sea. This was done in co-operation with the Port Authority's staffs and Indian crews engaged upon the river, and involved considerable risk, as these small craft were not built to stand up to such an ordeal, and might well have foundered in the storms that occur at this time of year. Proceeding, however, in several convoys escorted by motor launches, they made their passage safely along the coast, helping to evacuate personnel from Bassein.

The boisterous wind and heavy seas rendered it necessary for some vessels to proceed very slowly, for if they maintained speed they shipped water faster than they could get rid of it.

A Burma Navy Officer who was in a tug boat described how water was knee-deep on deck.

Larger vessels left Rangoon later, escorted by H.M.I. ships.

Soon after the tug reached Akyab, a strange-looking convoy arrived from Bassein, consisting of flat-bottomed river steamers, barges and launches with large numbers of evacuees. It too had had to brave the perils of the open sea, but the Indian seamen who manned it showed the greatest courage and resourcefulness.



Manned by Indian crews, launches of the Royal Indian Navy keep a constant patrol in Burma waters, incessantly harassing the Japanese. They work in close co-operation with Army and Air Forces, hitting the enemy hard where it hurts most. Courageous men manning the launches are doing splendid work under difficult conditions and are proving the sterling quality of India's Navy.

Photo shows all guns trained on the Burma coast, ready for immediate action.

In Akyab the Burma Navy's personnel helped to evacuate refugees and surplus stores, and while patrolling the coast and inland waterways—in the later stages under continuous enemy surveillence—kept as much control as possible over marauding bands of hooligans. One of their launches stood by to rescue Royal Air Force men who might have to bale out over deep water.

On shore, officers of the Burma Navy, with R.I.N. ratings, assisted in maintaining electric, water and other essential services, and when evacuation was at last necessary, demolished jetties and sank vessels that could not be removed to safety.

Story of a Successful Raid

[Here is the story of the highly successful raid carried out on the Arakan coast on the night of February 21-22, 1942, when a small force of troops entered Hunters Bay, landed on the waterfront at Myebon, stayed ashore for five hours, during which time they blew up jetties, godowns and dumps and came away safely accompanied by several Indians who asked to be taken back.]

OUR troops embarked in vessels of the Royal Indian Navy Coastal Forces which left their base about dusk, stole past Akyab standing well out to sea, and entered Hunters Bay, some 60 miles south-east of Akyab. They made straight for the head of the bay where lies Myebon, a port which has been used by the Japanese as a supply base and line of communications centre.

Once ashore, the troops got busy on a carefully worked-out plan. The only two Japs they encountered were soon disposed of. Local inhabitants did not interfere and soon the raiders were dynamiting stores, godowns, jetties and key buildings.

Hand grenades helped to make the party go with a bang and soon the waterfront was devastated. In addition, several craft in the harbour, sampans and coastal vessels, were sent to the bottom.

Meanwhile, other troops had penetrated into the town. News of their presence rapidly spread, aided by the noise of explosions. A trickle of Indians began to come in, hailing our men as brothers and deliverers. When they heard that the attackers were leaving shortly, they asked to be allowed to go along with them—anything rather than live under the galling Japanese yoke. Their request was granted.

When the job was completed "according to plan" the landing parties withdrew to their ships in good order. Soon they were under way, sailing past Akyab and cocking a shook at it, and were safely home shortly afterwards.

The operation was a complete success. It entailed no casualties, inflicted considerable damage on enemy installations and brought in valuable information. Troops and crews were highly elated by the clockwork precision of the show and the results obtained.

R.I.N. Vessel Shells Machine-gun "Nests"

HOW a Royal Indian Navy ship bombarded Japanese machine-gun "nests" near Akyab during the Burma campaign of last year after beating off a heavy dive-bombing attack was revealed on her return to an Indian port.

Normally engaged in mine-sweeping, the vessel was from March to May 1942 employed on voyages of patrol and reconnaissance off the enemy-occupied coast of Burma. On May 3 four air raids were made on Akyab, one stick of bombs dropping close to her starboard quarter, and after the third raid her Commanding Officer was ordered to shell the Japanese positions along the right bank of a river just south of the port.

Three quarters of an hour after she had left her anchorage seven Japanese bombers swooped on the R.I.N. ship, diving repeatedly from different directions as she zigzagged in the shoal-strewn channel and blazed away with her A.A. armament. The nearest bomb fell only five feet away, but so effective was the fire maintained by the ship's company that the airmen became more cautious and released their bombs from a higher altitude. At times during the attack the vessel was almost hidden by fountains of water raised by the bombs, and a rescue launch actually started from shore in the belief that she had been sunk.

An 18-year old midshipman and two Indian signalmen were among those manning her machine guns. After adjusting the steering gear, which had suffered some damage, the R.I.N. vessel, her deck littered with fragments of bombs, proceeded up the river and shelled enemy positions stretching nine miles along the bank. Having silenced the machine guns and destroyed the buildings from which the Japanese were attacking our river traffic, she steamed back to Akyab, and shortly afterwards embarked a large number of troops and put to sea as escort to a convoy.

In Hospitable Scotland

On the Banks of Loch Lomond

LONDON is the place for sight-seeing, but give us Scotland for hospitality. Members of the ship's company of H.M.I.S. *Jumna*, one of the Royal Indian Navy's latest sloops, thus sum up conclusions on their stay in the British Isles, though they add in fairness to England that they spent only a few days there. *Jumna* is now in Eastern waters, engaged like her sister ships of the Royal Indian Navy in the defence of India.

One of the ship's company recently described in an interview how officers and men made the voyage from India in a palatial liner and on reaching their destination in Scotland, in the early hours of a cold February morning, were cheered by the sight of an ample meal of Indian curry and rice. The men were accommodated in a castle on the banks of Loch Lomond, famous in song, and had spacious living quarters in surroundings whose beauty is world renowned. After their duties in the dockyard, he said, they usually had the afternoon and evening at their disposal for trips into the neighbouring town, cinema-going, walks and boating on Loch Lomond.

"The people in the neighbourhood," he added "were most hospitable and used often to invite us to their houses. Food was strictly rationed, but they stinted themselves to provide us with a substantial meal. They showed great interest in India, and we had to answer many questions about our country. Everybody was working hard, cheerful and confident of victory, no air raid ever damping the people's spirits. On Sundays we returned their hospitality at the castle."

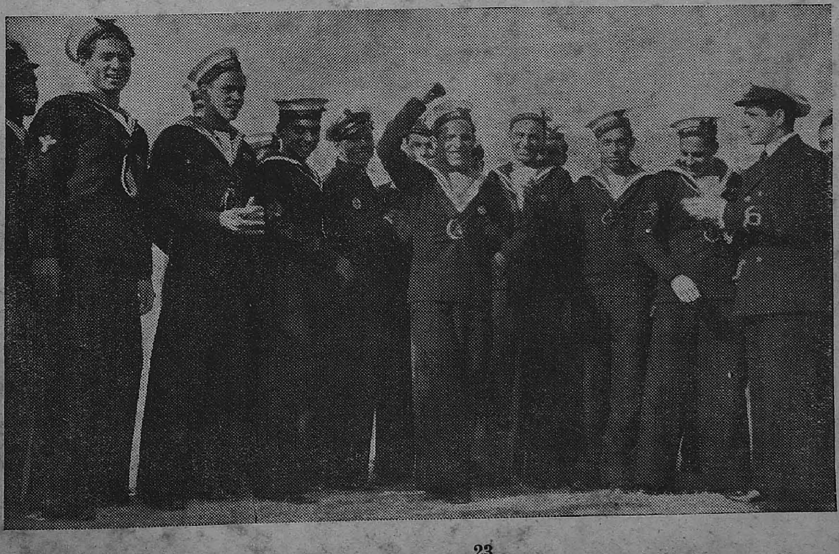
News of India was received at night through special B.B.C. broadcasts.

For her trials *Jumna* went to the North of Scotland, where the ship's company raised a football eleven to play an R.I.N. team. During all this time correspondence was kept up with friends in Scotland.

Early in July they were back in Scotland, and leave in any part of the United Kingdom was granted. Some ratings went to Edinburgh, but most preferred London thinking that they could not return to India without a visit to the metropolis of the world. In London they had a great time sight-seeing, and people made them feel at home, but the city was too vast to be properly appreciated in a short tour. Signs of air raid damage were surprisingly few.

Jumna helped to escort several more convoys, and then after returning to Scotland, where the ship's company said goodbye to their many friends, started for the East.

In the opinion of some aboard, her good furtune in escaping serious damage was due to a sprig of white heather. If that is so, it is one more kindness to her from hospitable Scotland.



A happy group of Royal Indian Navy ratings photographed with an officer in camp.

SEAMEN OF INDIA ON DUTY.—A still from the Film Advisory Board production " Seamen of India " showing how sailors of the Royal Indian Navy are defending the shores of their country. A sailor of the Royal Indian Navy at the range finder of a gun.

IN THE ROYAL INDIAN NAVY.—Men of a minesweeper of the Royal Indian Navy with a breech-loading gun.